

Backstage

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER – FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

**A first for the English cricketers and a first for *Amiga Format*
Nick Veitch isn't sure which is more worthy of celebration!**

What a celebration we are having here. It is the 100th issue of *Amiga Format*, and one for which, I hope you agree, we've pushed the boat out a bit. There are thousands of pounds worth of prizes to be won in this issue, hundreds of top 100s and plenty of amusing and interesting insights into the history of the Amiga, and the most successful Amiga magazine.

In fact it is a landmark issue in another way, at least for me. I started working on *Amiga Format* in the middle of issue 51, so now I have worked on as many issues of *AF* as issues I haven't worked on. I find it kind of strange, because I well remember buying issue 1, before I ever dreamt that I would make a living as an Amiga journalist. In fact, I remember buying an issue of *ST/Amiga Format*.

But here I am, and now I'm the longest serving editor of the title too, with 32 issues behind me. And, I'll also be celebrating my birthday in the middle of this issue. So, If I appear bloated and hung over next month then you know why.

But of course, we wouldn't be having this celebration if it wasn't for you, our readers. I know many of you have been reading *Amiga Format* since issue one, while others have simply joined in at a later date. We owe a great debt to all of you, and this special issue is

just our way of saying thanks for all your support.

100S ALL ROUND


You will notice in this issue that we have our top 100s of all time in various categories. There was much debate about it... oh, hang on Australia have just lost their seventh wicket, for only 48 runs. Sorry, I got a bit distracted there. Anyway. We racked our memories, scoured the Internet, searched the cupboard under the stairs and even had a skim through some of our back issues to bring you some definitive judgements.



Out! A great month for cricket and party time in the AF office.

There was much arguing about what should and shouldn't be in the lists, and indeed, what should go where. *Lightwave* – yes, it is probably the most famous... oh, hello, another Australian wicket gone... er, it is probably the best known and indeed best 3D software, but hasn't its development slowed down a lot. Isn't *Directory Opus* actually a better choice, as it is more widely used, and more invaluable on a day to day basis?

So the conversations went, but nothing provoked as much discussion as the games 100. Was *Rainbow Islands* better than *Bubble Bobble*? Where did *Railroad Tycoon* fit into the equation? My goodness, the Australians are gone for 118... oops, where was I? Oh yes, games. Was *Colonization* a worthy successor to *Civ*? Which was the best tennis game? As you can imagine, everyone had very different ideas, but I suspect that the combined, distilled knowledge of the *AF* team has managed to make a fair stab at what must be considered a worthy 100, even if you might want to change some of the positions. It has been interesting for us too, in seeing what a wealth of excellent software and hardware the Amiga has to offer.

Well, I suppose I better be off to finish the rest of the issue – it looks like Thorpe and Hussain are going to reach their centuries a little bit before we do... 

Subscribers' Superdisk

Nick Veitch talks you through the programs that are the subs disk.



BLITZBANK

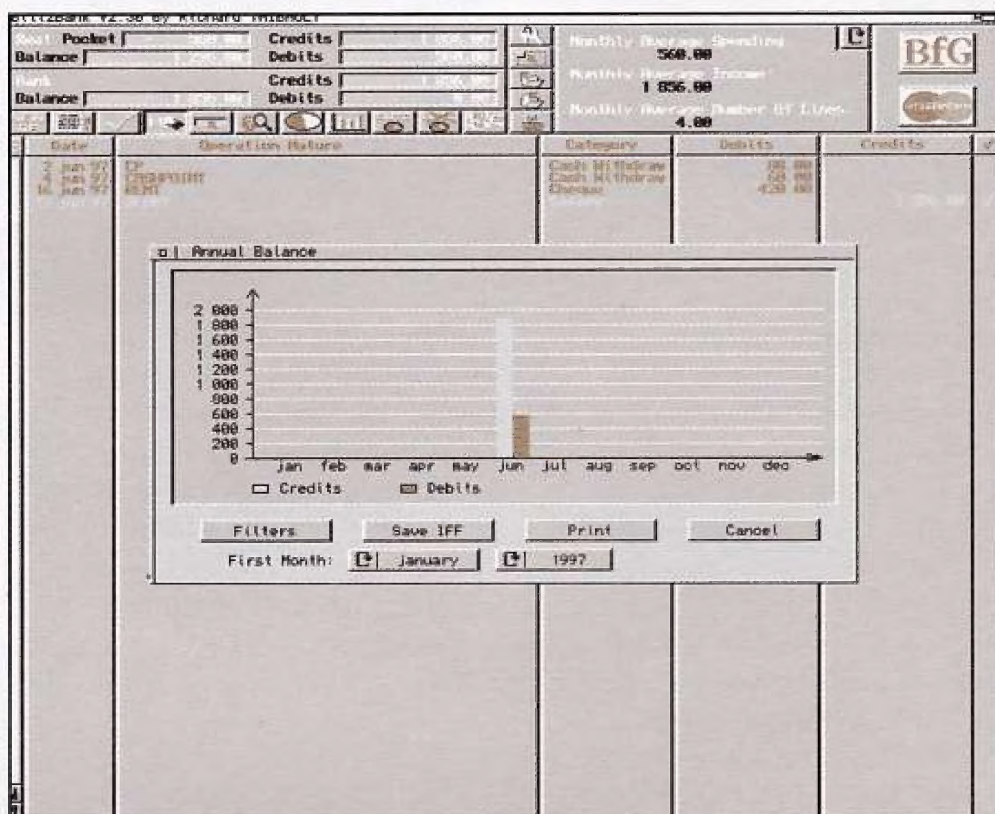
© Thibault Richard
(WB2, 2Mb)

This rather excellent piece of Shareware is designed to come to the rescue if you, like me, live in constant fear of letters from the bank, and cashpoint machines telling you to bugger off. It is, simply, one of those chequebook/bank account reconciliation programs, which keeps track of your finances.

You can enter transactions, and the software will keep track of your bank balance for you. Even better, you can program in repetitive debits (such as rent and direct debits) and credits (like salary or pocket money) which are then automatically entered on the relevant date.

All expenditure can be categorised, allowing you to draw up meaningful graphs explaining where all the money has gone. The clever program will even forecast your finances for months in advance, given enough data.

In case it all becomes too gruesome, there is a pleasant little tune which plays to take your mind off all that money disappearing off to the gas board/landlord.



Balance your budget and work out exactly how much you are spending on jammy doughnuts each month with the rather excellent *BlitzBank*.

ASCIIARTPRO STUDIO

© Andrew Crowe

Some things never change. Give people 1024 x 768 screenmodes. Give them 256 colours, or even 24-bit graphics cards. It doesn't make much difference, they still, for some reason, think that it's really cool to make pictures out of standard ASCII characters.

GETTING STARTED

To get as much as possible on this disk, most files are compressed with the *LZX* utility. There is no *Workbench Startup-Sequence* so to access the programs, boot from your *Workbench* disk. Locate the programs you want in the drawers on this disk

and double-click on the icon to run the decompression script. The programs are expanded into the RAM disk. You may then transfer them on to any disk you like. Not all of the files have icons, so be careful when copying the files.

There is some application for this though, even in the modern world, because it does allow you to create some nice signatures for emails.

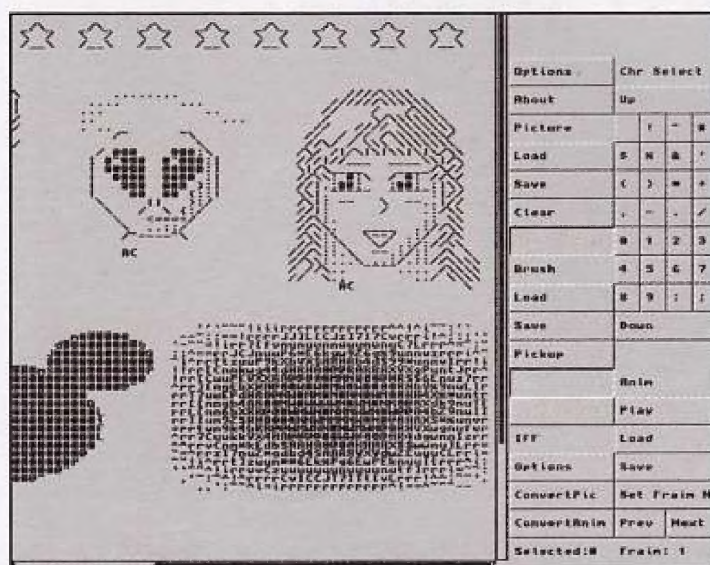
This program purports to be the ASCII equivalent of *Personal Paint* – there are different paint modes and even brush functions to be used in the construction of your alphanumeric masterpiece.

You can import and automatically convert IFF pictures too, with adjustable settings for contrast and brightness. And as if that wasn't enough, the software will even create ASCII animations.

BENCHTRASH

© Thomas Richter
(WB2)

Yes, this is another one of those programs which gives you a trashcan on the Workbench screen, just like on the Macintosh. I don't normally hold with this sort of nonsense, but I have made an exception in this case because this is the best implementation of this type of program I have ever seen. As well as simply being able to delete files, it will also attempt to eject any removable media icons which are dropped on top of it.



ASCIIARTPro Studio – it draws pictures with letters.

MACFIND

© Paul Bowlay
(WB2+)

Whilst we're in the vein of copying Mac type things, here is another utility you may find useful. The basic idea is to copy the "find file" utility on the Mac. Now it has to be said that the Mac organises its disks and icons differently, so the Mac version is a lot quicker, but this is by far the most convenient and powerful GUI-based searcher on the Amiga. It is also highly configurable, so you can choose to search for a very specific range of files.

HTML FIX

© Felix Schwarz

This is a rather cunning little program which can help save you a lot of bother when creating or managing an HTML site. Some servers are a bit finicky about case-sensitivity in filenames so *HTML Fix* allows you to search through all your HTML programs, changing references to files to uppercase, and then renaming all the other files to match.

In addition, the process will size up GIF images and add the correct attributes to the HTML source!

DISKSAFE

© Thomas Richter

DiskSafe is a cunning little program which patches the keyboard reset. Why would you want to do that you might ask. Well, at the moment, if you reset in the middle of writing a file to a disk, that device will most likely become invalidated, which is a bad thing. This patch quite simply holds the reboot command until disk activity has ceased, preventing the problem.

One note of caution, this file may not work on some Amigas, including most A500s.

MICROREMINDER & DREMIND

Don't forget things. This software will help you. I'm sure I had something else to tell you about it, but I've forgotten.

DEFAULT-TOOL CHANGER

© Frank Zühlsdorff

This tool will be invaluable to you if you are always installing a lot of software. Unlike software which will intercept calls for particular tools, this program actually changes the default tool preferences, which saves a lot of time. No more having to install thirty different text readers with oh-so-amusing names like "Evenmore", "Less" and "Least".

It will scan a specified directory and let you know all the tooltypes it finds there. Then you can just reassign the ones you don't like, and the software will change them for you. Hurrah!



CD VERSION OWNERS

CD version owners also have the subdisk stored on the CD for convenience. It is archived and protected with a password which prevents non-subscribers from accessing it.

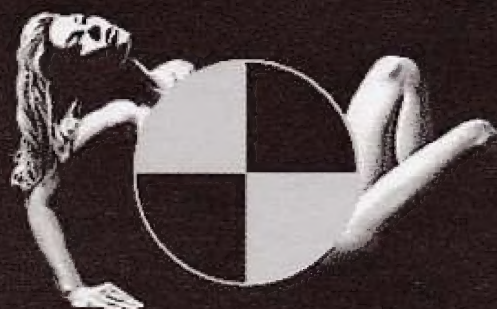
This month's secret password: CENTURY

BACKSTAGE COMPO

★ WIN ★



Crash and Burn!



CRASH

1996
cannes
winner

special jury prize for
originality, daring and audacity

We have three copies of Angela Schmidt's superb *MakeCD* and *RDB-Salv* programs up for grabs.

If you'd like to win one just answer this simple question:

"Who was the author of the book that the film 'Crash' was based on?"

Answers on a postcard please with your name, address and telephone number to reach us by **September 28th**.

Send your entries to: *Crash and Burn comp* • *Amiga Format*
29 Monmouth Street • Somerset • BA1 2DL